

*Facsimile No. 703-872-9306*9D-DW-19893
PATENTIN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace paragraph 23 with the following replacement paragraph.

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[0023] Escutcheon 136 is mounted to upper edge 162 of outer door panel 160 and, in one embodiment, is fabricated from an injection molded plastic material. It is contemplated, however, that other suitable materials and fabrication methods may be employed within the scope of the present invention. Escutcheon 136 includes a latch portion 174 for engagement with a door latch assembly (not shown), such as a dishwasher latch assembly known in the art, and also includes a control panel mounting surface 176 extending beneath escutcheon latch portion 174. Control panel mounting surface 176, in an exemplary embodiment, is substantially flat and planar and includes appropriate openings 178 therethrough for routing wire leads of a control panel (not shown), and also openings 180 therethrough for control displays, selectors, and control components. In one embodiment, escutcheon 136 is configured for surface mounting of a membrane switch assembly control panel (not shown) familiar to those in the art, and the membrane switch assembly may be attached to control panel mounting surface 176 with suitable adhesive materials, such as pressure sensitive tape. In alternative embodiments, other mechanical, electrical or electromechanical control panel mechanisms known in the art may be mounted, connected, coupled, attached, or otherwise engaged to escutcheon 136 and coupled to a dishwasher control module or mechanism (not shown), such as for example, a control board (not shown) for executing user selected dishwasher cycles and features.

Please replace paragraph 26 with the following replacement paragraph.

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[0026] Figure 3 is a cross sectional view of outer door panel 160 illustrating outwardly curved (concave in Figure 3) or bowed outer surface 270 ~~170~~ extending between lateral side edges 166, 168. It is contemplated, however, that the benefits of the present invention may be appreciated with substantially planar outer door panels, i.e., panels generally without curvature.

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Please replace paragraph 28 with the following replacement paragraph.

a3 [0028] ~~As illustrated in Figure 4, thirteen~~ Thirteen ribs 212 depend from escutcheon lower edge 182, ~~of which only five are representatively show in Figure 4. eleven of which~~ Of the thirteen ribs 212, eleven span substantially an equal length of control panel mounting surface lower edge 190 and are approximately positioned equidistant from one another. Ribs 212 are generally arranged relative to one another to match the curvature of outer door panel 160 and to facilitate engagement of escutcheon 136 with outer door panel 160. That is, ribs 212 are located along a curved path that is complementary to curvature of outer door panel 160.

Please replace paragraph 29 with the following replacement paragraph.

a4 [0029] A pair of ribs 212 depend opposite one another adjacent escutcheon lateral edges 186, 188, respectively, and likewise are substantially equally spaced from adjacent ribs 212 located beneath control panel mounting surface 176. While the ~~thirteen ribs 212 illustrated in Figure 4~~ have been found adequate to satisfactorily position escutcheon 136 with respect to outer door panel 160 (shown in Figures 2 and 3), it is recognized that greater or fewer ribs 212 may be employed in alternative embodiments while achieving at least some of the benefits of the present invention. In addition, the ~~illustrated thirteen ribs 212~~ have been found to generate a sufficient but not excessive interference fit with outer door panel 160 during assembly of the door, and it is recognized that altering the number of ribs 212 may positively or negatively affect an amount of force required to engage escutcheon 136 to outer panel 160, as well as the resultant interference fit for subsequent assembly operations requiring handling of door assembly 120 (shown in Figure 2).

Please replace paragraph 33 with the following replacement paragraph.

a5 [0033] Rib 212 and escutcheon lip 228 define slot 232 for retaining upper edge 162 of outer door panel 160, and rib 212 includes an angled lower portion 250 forming a guide surface 252 to locate panel upper edge 162 within retaining slot 232, and a panel engagement portion

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254 extending parallel to escutcheon lip 228 and defining slot 232 at an upper end of angled portion 250 of rib 212. Once panel upper edge 162 is located within retaining slot 232, rib panel engagement portion 254 engages upper panel edge 162 and, as necessary, flexes outer panel 160 so that it is generally flush with escutcheon lower edge 182. Rib 212 includes a reinforcing section 260 behind angled lower portion 250 to prevent flexing of rib 212 when engaging it to outer panel 160.

Please replace paragraph 37 with the following replacement paragraph.

[0037] Figure 7 is a front elevational view of a second embodiment of an escutcheon 270 for a dishwasher door assembly, such as door assembly 120 (shown in Figures 1 and 2). Unlike escutcheon 136 (shown in Figures 1-6), escutcheon 270 includes a curved lower front face 272 extending beneath a control panel mounting surface 274, and a plurality of formations 276 depending from a lower edge 277 of escutcheon 270 to facilitate proper positioning of escutcheon 270 relative to an outer door panel upper edge, such as edge 162 (shown in Figure 2). Similar to those described above in relation to Figures 4-6[D], formations 276 define an elongated retaining slot (not shown in Figure 4) for receiving an outer door panel upper edge 162, and a plurality of positioning ribs 278 extending into the slot to engage panel upper edge 162 and properly position outer panel 160 (shown in Figures 2 and 3) relative to the slot. As such, a uniform flush appearance between escutcheon lower edge 277 and outer panel upper edge 162 is consistently obtained while simplifying assembly of the door.

Please replace paragraph 40 with the following replacement paragraph.

[0040] While the eleven ribs 278 illustrated in Figure 4 have been found adequate to satisfactorily position escutcheon 270 with respect to an outer door panel, such as outer door panel 160 (shown in Figures 2 and 3), it is recognized that greater or fewer ribs 278 may be employed in alternative embodiments while achieving at least some of the benefits of the present invention. In addition, the illustrated eleven ribs 278 have been found to generate a sufficient but

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67 not excessive interference fit with outer door panel 160 during assembly of the door, and it is recognized that altering the number of ribs 278 may positively or negatively affect an amount of force required to engage escutcheon 270 to panel 160, as well as the resultant interference fit to withstand handling of the door assembly in subsequent assembly operations.